

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 AID-20

RSR-01 L-03 /105 W

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R 181125 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8256

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 0820

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, OAU, SL

SUBJECT: NEW GOSL MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: DESMOND EDGAR
FASHOLE LUKE

REF: (A) FREETOWN 814; (B) FREETOWN FS-405, 9/11/70 (NOTAL)

1. DESMOND LUKE, APPOINTED YESTERDAY AS GOSL MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, IS A BRIGHT, YOUNG (37), PERSONABLE ATTORNEY FROM ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MOST DISTINGUISHED FREETOWN CREOLE FAMILIES. HIS FATHER WAS SPEAKER OF THE LAST PARLIAMENT AND HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE. DESMOND IS A GRADUATE OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE.

2. LUKE WAS APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO GERMANY IN 1969 AFTER SEVERAL YEARS IN A VERY SUCCESSFUL FREETOWN LAW PRACTICE. PRIOR TO HIS APPOINTMENT HE SERVED ON PRESIDENT STEVENS' " KITCHEN CABINET", COMPOSED LARGELY OF CREOLES. HE RETURNED TO FREETOWN EARLIER THIS YEAR INTENT ON RUNNING FOR PARLIAMENT UNDER THE APC BANNER. THE APC CENTRAL COMMITTEE DENIED HIM THE PARTY SYMBOL BUT HE RAN AS AN INDEPENDENT AND WON EASILY WITH ACTIVE BACKING OF VICE PRESIDENT KOROMA AND THE APPROVAL OF
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PRESIDENT STEVENS. HE IS THE ONLY MP IN THE NEW PARLIAMENT WHO DID NOT RUN WITH THE APC SYMBOL.

3. LUKE IS AN INTELLIGENT, HAIL- FELLOW- WELL- MET TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL WITH A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR BUT HE IS NOT PARTICULARLY TRUSTWORTHY. WHILE BASICALLY PRO- WESTERN, HE HAS NO STRONG IDEOLOGICAL VIEWS. HE IS FIRST AND FOREMOST AN OPPORTUNIST. HE HAS HAD GOOD ACCESS TO THE PRESIDENT FOR SEVERAL YEARS AND IS DEFINITELY A YOUNG MAN ON THE WAY UP. LUKE IS A SUPER CREOLE - A BLACK ENGLISHMAN IN DRESS, MANNER AND OUTLOOK. POLITICALLY, HOWEVER, HE IS AFRICAN.
OLSON

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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30 JUN 2005

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